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SUBJECT: PRESIDENT-ELECT'S GOVERNMENT PLAN

¶1. (U) Summary: President-elect Lobo's plan for his government aims to achieve sustainable development that will improve the lives of his fellow citizens. His plan is based on three pillars: creating jobs and reducing poverty, expanding the reach and quality of education, and ensuring security. Lobo's foreign policy will be focused on the return of Honduras to the international community and will emphasize the country's development. Lobo will seek to decentralize government and improve access to quality education. Lobo intends to introduce a new health care system based on universal coverage that will include the most vulnerable members of society who are currently excluded from health services. Lobo pledges to fight crime while guaranteeing respect for the constitution and international standards regarding human rights. Lobo proposes to strengthen the capacity of the police and support measures to improve the efficiency of the judicial system. Lobo plans to adopt a policy for youth to increase their employment and educational opportunities. He also proposes to promote initiatives to keep the elderly in productive activities and promote legislation to protect emigrants. Economic aspects of Lobo's plan will be reported septel. End Summary.

¶2. (U) President-elect Porfirio "Pepe" Lobo gave the Ambassador a copy of his plan for government. Its objective is to bring dignity to all persons by achieving sustainable and integral development to bring about an improved quality of life. The plan states that the Lobo government will promote dialogue to achieve a consensus on the country's priorities. The plan is based on three pillars: 1) improving families' standard of living by creating jobs and reducing poverty, 2) expanding the reach and quality of education and health care, and 3) ensuring security so that citizens can live in peace and harmony.

Foreign Affairs

¶3. (U) According to the plan, Lobo believes that international relations should be framed by respect for people's self-determination, human rights, mutual cooperation, the fostering of peace, and international security. Lobo aims to reestablish the confidence of the international community in Honduras and will promote the image of Honduras abroad. His government's foreign policy will emphasize the country's development, particularly the fight against poverty, and aim to successfully insert Honduras into the international economy. His administration plans to cooperate with international security objectives by signing cooperation agreements on security, terrorism, and

combating narco-trafficking. It plans to work for the protection of Hondurans abroad and will create a consular corps within the diplomatic corps for this purpose. It also intends to strengthen its diplomatic missions to international organizations. Lobo will support Central American integration, especially a customs union and regional projects aimed at improving regional infrastructure and competition.

Decentralization

¶4. (U) The plan provides for strengthening coordination between central government institutions and the Association of Municipalities of Honduras (AMHON) to strengthen governance through the promotion of decentralization. The decentralization policy will be based on: strengthening local capacity, gradual fiscal decentralization, efficiency in the use of resources and provision of public services, transparency, and strengthening citizen participation. Financial incentives will be provided to local governments that show commitment to sustainable use of natural resources.

Education

¶5. (U) Lobo and his team believe that schools should be the axis for change and that the values upheld in schools should be: transparency, honesty, responsibility, pluralism, equity, solidarity, and continual transformation. Education will

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become bilingual (with English) nationwide, but with particular focus on areas of the country catering to tourism. The plan states that schools need to have the capacity to prepare students to adapt and contribute to the country's economic and social development. When Lobo takes office, his administration plans to work so that schools will teach skills that the modern world needs and will utilize new information and communication technologies.

¶6. (U) Lobo's education policy will be based on: 1) participation by society in decisions regarding transparency and administration, 2) equity in access to education services so all enjoy equality of opportunity, 3) improved efficiency in the use of financial resources, and 4) provision of quality education so students achieve high academic results. Educational standards will be set up that are linked to teachers' evaluations. Lobo's government will guarantee that all children with special needs have access to educational services whether through formal or special programs. Lobo's program pledges that by 2013, 85 percent of 5-year olds will have access to kindergarten and 93 percent of children between six and nine years of age will be at a grade appropriate for their age.

¶7. (U) Lobo plans to provide 10,000 lempiras (USD 500) a year to female-headed households if their children enroll and stay in school. His government plans to donate personal computers to one million school-aged children. His government also proposes to work through local governments to set up a national nursery program for all children up to 4 years of age to allow mothers to join the work force. It also intends to set up educational centers to facilitate the reintegration into the school system of children and adolescents who interrupted their education. In addition, the Lobo program provides that 90 percent of the work force will be literate by 2013 and his government will strive to reduce overall illiteracy to at least ten percent by using local structures and the services of retired teachers.

Health

¶18. (U) Lobo plans to introduce a new health care system based on universal coverage, reorganization of the health sector, and strengthening of the health services provided by the government. Lobo proposes to change the country's public health system to a health insurance system that will gradually and progressively and in priority order incorporate the groups currently excluded from health services: the poor and vulnerable, the elderly, ethnic groups, and rural residents. The new health system will consist of subsidized financing and free health services provided by the Ministry of Health for those who cannot pay. There will be shared financing through the Honduran Social Security Institute (IHSS) for workers in the country's largest municipalities. In addition, the new administration plans to promote IHSS coverage to the entire working population.

¶19. (U) The Lobo administration plans to promote a "Medicine for All" program to ensure the supply of medicines to public hospitals and health centers. It plans to modernize and professionalize the purchase, warehouse, and distribution procedures for medicine for hospitals and ambulatory services to guarantee their availability and quality. It plans to decentralize and render hospital administration more efficient through creation of administrative boards with community participation.

Law and Order

¶10. (U) The Lobo plan says that the state has the obligation to create the necessary conditions for a safe environment for all its citizens. Lobo states in his plan that he wants to make Honduras a secure country where all rights and liberties are guaranteed, where citizens live in peace, and where there is a climate favorable to investment and job creation. Lobo pledges to fight crime, guaranteeing respect for international human rights standards in order to have a society that lives in peace and harmony. Lobo's security policy is based on three principles: social peace and order, application of the law, and accountability.

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¶11. (U) In order to achieve these goals, the Lobo administration plans to put in place appropriate salaries and benefits for the police, begin the process of technological modernization of the police, and enhance police supervision.

The Lobo administration intends to ensure the provision and modernization of equipment and laboratories needed for adequate police investigation. It proposes to strengthen the capability of the police to manage crime scenes to create in the medium term an Institute of Forensics and Criminal Science. It plans to implement strict control and regulations on possession and use of firearms. It intends to promote the reforms needed to ensure criminals complete their sentences, especially felonies and crimes against women. It also plans to promote the rehabilitation of the jail population and separate it into three categories based on the crime committed. Lobo and his team plan to set up a program to facilitate the social reintegration of youth involved in crime and gangs, including those deported back to Honduras for this reason. It plans to promote regional initiatives to increase police and judicial cooperation against narco-trafficking and international terrorism.

¶12. (U) The Lobo government plans to support measures introduced to improve the efficiency of the judicial system. According to the plan, it intends to support making the selection of judges competitive to ensure that their selection is based on merit and ethical behavior. In addition, the newly elected government plans to support the approval of a law regarding the judicial career to promote a Supreme Court dedicated exclusively to its juridical function by transferring its administrative tasks to a different body.

In order to advance transparency and fight corruption, Lobo's administration plans to push for reform of the

government contracting law. It plans to create a specialized contracting center for large governmental purchases so that contracts can be analyzed, planned and carried out in accordance with technical recommendations and the law.

Youth, the Elderly, and Migrants

¶13. (U) Lobo plans to adopt a policy for youth that will support structural initiatives to increase opportunities for the employment of youth and will expand their opportunities to pursue formal, informal, and vocational education. Lobo proposes to seek to develop a civic-democratic culture to promote participation by youth in public affairs. Lobo and his team intend to guarantee an integral approach to the principal health problems affecting youth such as sexually transmitted diseases and teenage pregnancy. His administration also plans to promote the rehabilitation and social inclusion of youth with disabilities. Fifty academically gifted youth with limited financial resources will annually receive international scholarships to enable them to pursue their studies at the world's best universities.

¶14. (U) Lobo plans to promote initiatives to keep the elderly in productive activities, especially in the areas of tourism, child care, and traditional cuisine. His administration plans to utilize international aid to set up a center for the elderly in each of the country's departments. Lobo wants to create a Ministry for the Family with an Under Secretary with responsibility for children, the family, and the elderly. This office would permanently design, promulgate, approve, execute, and monitor a state policy on children and the family.

¶15. (U) Lobo plans to promote the Law on Protection of the Emigrant proposed by the National Party in the Congress so that it is implemented. Under that law, he would create a National Council on Emigration that will formulate proposals and recommendations on this subject and will ensure compliance with the law. The Lobo government proposes to create an office of returned Honduras to assist them with reintegration into Honduran society. In addition, the Lobo administration will try to promote use of remittances into productive activities that will ensure the recipients a better future.

16, (SBU) Comment: The Lobo plan addresses the country's

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major social ills: poverty, lack of education, and lack of health care. With his National Party having garnered a majority of seats in the legislature, congressional support for this ambitious agenda is likely. One challenge will be paying for it, especially as Lobo takes office with international donors having suspended or terminated their assistance to Honduras in the wake of the June 28 coup d'etat. Another challenge will be the Lobo administration's capacity to implement such a wide range of challenging goals.

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